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SUBJECT: XCSS: EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ISSUES PAPER CE(77)6 FOR OCT 4
XCSS DISCUSSION ON EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS.
DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO PARA 19 WHICH GIVES
SECGEN'S PROPOSALS FOR WAY E/W WORK SHOULD BE CARRIED
FORWARD.
BEGIN TEXT:

I. EAST-WEST BALANCE OF TRADE AND PAYMENTS

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

3. THE RAPID EXPANSION OF EAST-WEST TRADE AND THE
SHARP RISE OF THE EASTERN DEFICIT IN RECENT YEARS
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RESULTED FROM A COMBINATION OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY
FACTORS. THE EASTERN COUNTRIES HAVE AIMED AT FAST
ECONOMIC GROWTH AND HAVE SOUGHT TO DEVELOP THEIR
TECHNOLOGICAL BASE AS RAPIDLY, CREATING A LARGE DEMAND
FOR IMPORTS FROM THE WEST. THE NEED TO SATISFY
CONSUMER PRESSURES HAS ALSO BEEN A PERMANENT FACTOR
SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR, BUT ITS IMPORTANCE WAS
INCREASED BY CROP FAILURES AND THE INADEQUATE
PRODUCTION OF CONSUMER GOODS. FINALLY, RECURRING
BOTTLENECKS, PARTLY RELATED TO THE DIVERSION OF

RESOURCES FOR OTHER PURPOSES, BECAME PARTICULARLY ACUTE IN THE CLOSING YEAR OF THE 1970-1975 PLAN AND NECESSITATED LARGE EMERGENCY IMPORTS OF INVESTMENT GOODS AND INDUSTRIAL INPUTS.

4. THE TRANSFORMATION AND MASSIVE EXPANSION OF INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS PERMITTED THE FINANCING OF A LARGE AND GROWING PART OF EASTERN IMPORTS WITHOUT DIRECT INTERVENTION BY WESTERN GOVERNMENTS. FURTHERMORE, THE 1972-1974 COMMODITY BOOM AND THE QUANTUM JUMP IN THE PRICE OF ENERGY (AND GOLD) BOOSTED THE HARD CURRENCY EARNINGS OF THE EAST, NOTABLY THE SOVIET UNION, AND THUS GENERATED A MORE OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK FOR EXPORTS.

5. AS FAR AS THE WEST WAS CONCERNED, THE SEARCH FOR NEW MARKETS DURING THE RECESSION PARTLY EXPLAINS THE RECENT EXPORT DRIVE OF MANY WESTERN ENTERPRISES, BUT FOR COUNTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN TRADITIONALLY IMPORTANT SUPPLIERS OF THE EAST, THE RISE IN EXPORTS IN 1974-75 WAS LARGELY THE RESULT OF A LONG-TERM STRATEGY, ORIGINATING IN THE LATE 1960S. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, AT THE SAME TIME, THAT IN THE SMALLER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES EXPORT-LED INDUSTRIAL GROWTH IS BEING INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZED AS A DRIVING FORCE OF THE ECONOMY.

FUTURE TRENDS

6. NO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE MAIN DETERMINANTS OF EAST-WEST TRADE CAN BE ANTICIPATED FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS. PUTTING ASIDE THE VAGARIES OF THE WEATHER AND OTHER UNFORESEEN ACCIDENTS, THE NEED FOR IMPORTS FROM THE WEST WILL CONTINUE TO RISE, STRENGTHENED, IF ANYTHING, BY THE GROWING PRESSURE FROM CONSUMERS. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER, THAT THE GROWING INSISTENCE OF EASTERN COUNTRIES ON COUNTER-TRADE COMMITMENTS MIGHT HAMPER THE EXPANSION OF WESTERN EXPORTS, PARTICULARLY IF THE IMPROVEMENT OF BUSINESS CONDITIONS ENABLES WESTERN ENTERPRISES TO FIND OUTLETS ELSEWHERE NOT BURDENED BY SUCH COMMITMENTS. ON THE EXPORT SIDE, ASSUMING A MODERATE RATE OF EXPANSION IN THE WEST, THE PROSPECTS ARE UNLIKELY TO IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY. STERN EXPORT AVAILABILITIES OF EASILY MARKETABLE INDUSTRIAL RAW MATERIALS, AND NOTABLY OF ENERGY PRODUCTS, ARE UNLIKELY TO RISE FAST, WHEREAS FOR THE TRADITIONAL EASTERN EXPORTS OF SEMI-FINISHED AND FINISHED MANUFACTURES, THE THREAT OF MARKET DISRUPTIONS AND COMPETITION WITH DEVELOPING

COUNTRY EXPORTS MIGHT RAISE SERIOUS PROBLEMS.

7. DESPITE THE LARGE IMPORTS (MAINLY INTO THE SOVIET UNION) OF WESTERN TECHNOLOGY, THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT THE EAST HAS BEEN ABLE TO DIFFUSE OR ADAPT THE TECHNOLOGY TO ANY SIGNIFICANT EXTENT (1). A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH, THEREFORE, IN EXPORTS OF MORE SOPHISTICATED MANUFACTURES (OR OF COMPONENTS AND SUB-CONTRACTING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF COOPERATION AGREEMENTS) SEEMS UNLIKELY. CONSEQUENTLY, THE EASTERN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEFICITS WILL PROBABLY PERSIST. SOME ADJUSTMENT THROUGH IMPORT RESTRAINT IS PROBABLE (AND INDEED HAS ALREADY OCCURRED IN 1976-77), BUT WOULD MERELY REDUCE THE DEFICIT WITHOUT REMOVING IT. IT IS ALSO FOR DISCUSSION WHETHER THE WEST WOULD BE PREPARED TO ASSIST THE REDUCTION OF THE EASTERN DEFICIT, BY PROMOTING LIBERALIZATION OF SUCH IMPORT RESTRICTIONS AS REMAIN IN FORCE.

FINANCING

8. THE FINANCING, OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, OF A RISING EASTERN DEBT WITHIN THE RANGE CURRENTLY VISUALIZED, WOULD APPEAR TO BE PREFERABLE TO A SUDDEN ADJUSTMENT IN THE CURRENT FLOWS, WHETHER THAT ADJUSTMENT TOOK THE FORM OF DRASTIC IMPORT RESTRICTIONS IN THE EAST OR OF AGGRESSIVE PENETRATION OF WESTERN MARKETS BY LOW-COST EASTERN MANUFACTURES WITHOUT ANY CHANGE IN THEIR STRUCTURE. INDEED, INAPPROPRIATE EXPORT PROMOTION POLICIES IN THE EAST AND INADEQUATE OVERALL DEMAND IN THE WEST HAVE CONTRIBUTED CONSIDERABLY TO THE RISE IN EASTERN DEBT. NEVERTHELESS, THE DEBT ALREADY ACCUMULATED ADDS TO THE DIFFICULTIES OF ADJUSTMENT AND CREATES ITS OWN PROBLEMS. THIS ALSO RAISES THE QUESTION OF THE DESIRABILITY OF FIXING CREDIT CEILINGS ON THE EAST AS A WHOLE, OR UPON INDIVIDUAL EASTERN COUNTRIES.

9. THERE ARE SOME OFFSETTING FORCES AT WORK. INADEQUATE CAPACITY UTILIZATION IN THE OECD AREA IS ASSOCIATED WITH WEAK DEMAND FOR LENDABLE FUNDS AND HENCE FACILITATES THE FINANCING OF EASTERN DEBT ON PRIVATE CAPITAL MARKETS. A FAST ECONOMIC RECOVERY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THE OECD AREA COULD LEAD TO A MARKED TIGHTENING OF

CREDIT--A DEVELOPMENT ANTICIPATED FOR QUITE SOME TIME, BUT WHICH HAS NOT YET MATERIALIZED--BUT IT WOULD ALSO MATERIALLY IMPROVE DEMAND FOR, AND PRICES OF, EASTERN EXPORTS OF INDUSTRIAL RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS. THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE THE RISK OF A LACK OF SYNCHRONIZATION, I.E., THAT THE TIGHTENING ON THE CAPITAL MARKETS COULD PRECEDE THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TRADE BALANCE OF THE EAST, OR THE EMERGENCE OF DIFFICULTIES FOR INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES RELATED TO THE MATURITY STRUCTURE OF THEIR DEBT AND TO THE COMPOSITION OF THEIR EXPORTS TO THE WEST. INVISIBLE EARNINGS WILL ALSO PLAY A SMALL PART IN THIS OFFSETTING PICTURE, PARTICULARLY INCOME FROM TRANSPORTATION.

10. CONSIDERABLE CONCERN OVER THE RAPID GROWTH OF EASTERN INDEBTEDNESS WAS EXPRESSED IN LATE 1976-EARLY 1977, BUT THIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN BROADLY UNWARRANTED. HOWEVER, THE CURRENT SITUATION IS NOT ONE WHICH ENCOURAGES UNDUE COMPLACENCY. GOVERNMENTS MIGHT WISH TO TAKE NOTE OF INCIPIENT FINANCING PROBLEMS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS. THE COMMITTEE MAY WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE GROWTH OF THE DEFICIT IMPOSES CONSTRAINTS ON THE EAST AND WHETHER OR NOT THERE MIGHT ALSO BE SOME CONSTRAINTS OPERATING ON THE WEST'S SCOPE FOR ACTION.

11. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO FIND ANY HARD EVIDENCE SUBSTANTIATING THE FINANCIAL MARKET'S BELIEF IN SOME KIND OF UMBRELLA SYSTEM UNDER WHICH THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BAIL OUT ANY EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY THAT MIGHT FIND ITSELF IN FINANCING DIFFICULTIES. IN ANY CASE, SHOULD SUCH A SITUATION OCCUR OR BE FORCED UPON AN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY, THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF HAVING TO SEEK SOVIET ASSISTANCE IN THIS WAY MIGHT
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BE SERIOUS FOR THE COUNTRY CONCERNED. ALTHOUGH SOME FORMS OF MUTUAL CONSULTATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ABOUT BORROWING ON WESTERN MARKETS PROBABLY EXIST WITHIN THE CMEA, THE DEGREE OF ACTUAL COORDINATION, AND INDEED SOLIDARITY, SEEMS TO VARY CONSIDERABLY FROM ONE EASTERN COUNTRY TO ANOTHER.

12. EASTERN COUNTRIES ARE NO LONGER MARGINAL BORROWERS ON INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS, NOR ARE THEY YET FULLY FLEDGED PARTNERS IN MAJOR FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS. TECHNICALLY SPEAKING, THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY THEIR DEBT ARE NOT FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF OTHER BORROWERS AND THEY NEED TO BE SEEN IN A WORLD-WIDE CONTEXT.

BALANCE OF ADVANTAGES

13. THE TRADE COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY HAD A FIRST DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE. IT IS A COMPLEX ONE WITH MANY POTENTIAL RAMIFICATIONS. FOR BOTH EAST AND WEST, TRADE IS AN ELEMENT IN THE POLICIES OF DETENTE, THERE ARE OF COURSE VARYING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE WAY IN WHICH THIS BALANCE IS BUILT UP. THERE IS THE VIEW THAT EAST-WEST TRADE, IN ECONOMIC TERMS, HAS BEEN HIGHLY FAVORABLE TO THE OECD COUNTRIES IN THE SENSE THAT IT SECURED OUTLETS FOR EXCESS CAPACITY, PROVIDED GOOD PROFITS, AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE MAINTENANCE OF EMPLOYMENT, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME NOT CREATING, SO FAR, AREAS OF VULNERABILITY FOR THE WEST. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT IS ARGUED THAT ALL THE ADVANTAGES HAVE ACCRUED TO THE EAST IN THAT THEY HAVE RECEIVED A LARGE TRANSFER OF SCARCE RESOURCES, INCREASING THEIR TECHNOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND EASING THEIR PROBLEMS OF RESOURCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ALLOCATION, AT A REAL RATE OF INTEREST OF ZERO, OR EVEN A NEGATIVE RATE. THERE ARE ALSO THE MANY VIEWS ON RECIPROCITY AND WHAT IT WOULD ENTAIL. ALL THESE ASPECTS WILL HAVE TO BE STUDIED FURTHER BEFORE THEY ARE RIPE FOR FULL DISCUSSION IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN SPECIAL SESSION.

II. EAST-WEST RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF WORLD ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE

14. IN AN INCREASINGLY INTERDEPENDENT WORLD ECONOMY CERTAIN ASPECTS OF EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS APPEAR TO IMPINGE ON, AND ARE IN TURN AFFECTED BY, RELATIONS OF BOTH EAST AND WEST WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

15. AN AREA OF SPECIAL CONCERN FOR OECD COUNTRIES' TRADE POLICIES AND INDUSTRIAL ADJUSTMENT IS THE COMPETITION BETWEEN EASTERN COUNTRIES AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON WESTERN MARKETS OF SEMI-FINISHED PRODUCTS AND LOW-COST MANUFACTURES. THE PATTERN OF EXPORTS FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST RESEMBLES VERY CLOSELY THAT BETWEEN DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. THIS COULD, AND TO SOME EXTENT ALREADY DOES, ENTAIL COMPETITION BETWEEN THE EAST AND THE SOUTH IN WESTERN MARKETS. THE POTENTIAL FRICTION MIGHT HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WEST'S RELATIONS WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE A REAL NEED FOR CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROBLEM AND ALSO FOR FURTHER DETAILED EXAMINATION.

16. ANOTHER AREA OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT IS THE COM-

PETITION BETWEEN EASTERN AND DEVELOPING COUNTRY
BORROWERS FOR LENDABLE FUNDS. THERE IS A CERTAIN
PARALLELISM IN THE DEBT INCURRED BY THE EAST AND THAT
OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE
GENERALLY BETTER CREDIT RATING OF THE EASTERN
COUNTRIES AND THEIR HIGHER ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY FOR
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INVESTMENT GOODS, THERE IS SOME DANGER, NOT ONLY OF
A CROWDING OUT OF THE LESS CREDITWORTHY BORROWERS,
BUT ALSO THAT AN UNDULY HIGH SHARE OF THE REAL RESOURCE
TRANSFER FROM THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES WOULD
CONTINUE TO FLOW TO THE EAST, RATHER THAN TO DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES.

17. SOME OFFSET TO THIS TREND COULD BE ACHIEVED BY
AN INCREASE IN THE VOLUME AND AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE
TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY EASTERN
COUNTRIES. IT SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE BORNE IN MIND THAT
THE HIGH LEVEL OF INDEBTEDNESS VIS-A-VIS THE EAST
OF SOME OF THE WEAK DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ALREADY
CREATES THE RISK THAT A RESCHEDULING OR CONSOLIDATION
OF THEIR DEBT TOWARDS OECD COUNTRIES WOULD BENEFIT
MAINLY THE EAST.

18. IT IS AN OPEN QUESTION WHAT ROLE, APART FROM
INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE,
COULD BE PLAYED BY EASTERN COUNTRIES TO ASSUME
RESPONSIBILITIES COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR INVOLVEMENT
IN WORLD TRADE AND LEVEL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.
THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF INCREASED EASTERN AID REMAIN
HYPOTHETICAL BUT THE COMMITTEE MAY WISH TO CONSIDER
WHETHER SUCH ASSISTANCE WOULD BE MORE BENEFICIAL IN
CERTAIN CONDITIONS. FURTHERMORE, IT MIGHT BE
DESIRABLE TO SECURE EASTERN PARTICIPATION IN THOSE
COMMODITY STABILIZATION SCHEMES WHERE THEY HAVE AN
IMPORTANT STAKE AS CONSUMERS OR PRODUCERS. EASTERN
PARTICIPATION IN EXISTING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
MIGHT ALSO BE EXAMINED ON AN AD HOC BASIS.

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19. AFTER A YEAR OF INTENSE OECD ACTIVITY IN MANY
AREAS OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
PROPOSES THE FOLLOWING ORIENTATION OF WORK:

(A) CONTINUED MONITORING OF EAST-WEST ECONOMIC

RELATIONS SUCH AS TRADE, DEBT AND FINANCING, SHIPPING, ETC., WITH REGULAR AND UPDATED STUDIES ON TRENDS AND OUTLOOKS ISSUED IN A SINGLE DOCUMENT. THESE STUDIES WOULD ALSO BE ON A MORE DISAGGREGATED BASIS, NOT ONLY BY COUNTRY (EAST AND WEST), BUT ALSO BY SECTOR, AND PRODUCT; SIMILAR DIFFERENTIATION OF THE STRUCTURE OF DEBT AND FINANCING PRACTICES BY COUNTRY;

(B) CONCENTRATION ON THE MACRO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE DATA AVAILABLE, INCLUDING

(I) COMPETITION BETWEEN EASTERN AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' EXPORTS ON OECD MARKETS (STRUCTURE OF EASTERN EXPORTS, CONSISTENCY OF PRESENT TRENDS AND POLICIES);

(II) MACRO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS AND ADJUSTMENT:

-- TRADE AND PAYMENTS OF THE EAST IN A MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK (I.E., INCLUDING RELATIONS WITH OPEC, NON-OIL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND OTHER COUNTRIES) AGAINST THE BROAD BACKGROUND OF OVERALL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS;

(III) THE CAPACITY OF EASTERN COUNTRIES TO ABSORB AND ADAPT WESTERN TECHNOLOGY AND THUS ALTER THEIR INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE, RESULTING IN CHANGES IN THE COMMODITY PATTERN AND EXPORT POTENTIAL OF INTRA-CMEA TRADE, AS WELL AS TRADE WITH THE WEST AND THIRD MARKETS;

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(IV) BALANCE OF ADVANTAGES IN EAST-WEST TRADE RELATIONS;

(C) IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A PROPER PERSPECTIVE FOR (A) AND (B) SOME WORK COULD BE UNDERTAKEN ON CMEA DEVELOPMENTS:

(I) THE EFFECTS OF EASTERN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION ON INTRA-EAST AND EAST-WEST TRADE;

(II) TRENDS AND PROSPECTS OF ENERGY PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION AND TRADE IN THE CMEA AREA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR TRADE ADJUSTMENT.

20. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WOULD ALSO INTEND TO CONTINUE THE OCCASIONAL INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH EXPERTS THAT HAVE BEEN INITIATED DURING THE COURSE OF THE PAST YEAR.

21. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WOULD WELCOME THE VIEWS OF

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN SPECIAL SESSION ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK ON EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS
AND ON THE PROPOSED FUTURE ORIENTATION. (END TEXT)
FOOTNOTE TO PARA 7, ABOVE: (1) A SECRETARIAT PAPER
(SPT(77)16) HAS BEEN CIRCULATED AND WILL BE DISCUSSED
ON 24TH AND 25TH OCTOBER, 1977, BY THE COMMITTEE
FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL POLICY.
KATZ UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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